

Message Text

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ACTION OES-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 EA-06 ACDA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 INR-05 L-01 NSAE-00 NASA-01 NSC-05 RSC-01 MC-01

SP-02 AID-05 EB-04 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01

OMB-01 CEA-01 OTPE-00 COME-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

AEC-05 (ISO) W

----- 080542

R 251540Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3570

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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DEPT FOR OES/SCI/SAM, PASS NASA

E.O. 11652 : N/A

TAGS: TSPA, FR

SUBJECT: THE ARIANE SPACE LAUNCHER

REF: A. PARIS 24159 B. PARIS 24441

SUMMARY: IN A DECISION AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL, THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS CONFIRMED IN FULL ITS COMMITMENTS TO THE EUROPEAN SPACE PROGRAM. FOR THE FRENCH, THIS MEANS BUDGETING \$45 MILLION IN 1975 FOR THE ARIANE SPACE LAUNCHER PROGRAM. THEIR PRIMARY MOTIVATION IS INDEPENDENCE. AS A RESULT OF THIS DECISION AND TIGHT BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS, THE FRENCH SPACE AGENCY WILL

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HAVE LESS FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR ITS NATIONAL AND BILATERAL

PROGRAMS. NO DECISION ON PROGRAM REDUCTIONS IS EXPECTED FOR ANOTHER TWO WEEKS. THE FRENCH ARE ASKING THEIR EUROPEAN SPACE PARTNERS TO PICK UP PART OF THE COSTS OF THE KOUROU AND TOULOUSE SPACE CENTERS AND TO ASSURE THAT THEY WILL USE THE ARIANE LAUNCHER. END SUMMARY.

1. MFA SPACE AFFAIRS DIRECTOR (PHILLIPE LOUET) CONFIRMED TO SCIATT THAT GOF WOULD MEET IN FULL ALL ITS COMMITMENTS IN THE EUROPEAN SPACE PROGRAMS, INCLUDING THE ARIANE LAUNCHER AND THE SPACE LAB. PART OF THE FRENCH CONTRIBUTION FOR ARIANE WILL COME FROM THE BUDGET OF THE FRENCH SPACE AGENCY (CNES) PROBABLY FORCING CNES TO CUT BACK ITS NATIONAL PROGRAMS. FOR EXAMPLE, SOME PLANNED DIAMANT LAUNCHINGS MIGHT BE DROPPED. ALSO CNES WILL PROBABLY NOT UNDERTAKE ANY NEW EXPENSIVE COMMITMENTS IN ITS BILATERAL PROGRAMS WITH THE US AND THE USSR. AT THE FRANCO-SOVIET MEETING IN KIEV IN EARLY OCTOBER, WHICH LOUET ATTENDED, THE FRENCH COULD NOT ACCEPT, AS EARLIER DISCUSSED, PARTICIPATION IN THE SOVIET EOS VENUS EXPLORATION -- THOUGH THIS REMAINED A FURTHER POSSIBILITY. (THE FRENCH WERE TO DEVELOP BALLOONS WHICH WOULD DESCEND FROM A SOVIET SPACECRAFT TO THE SURFACE OF VENUS.)

2. LOUET CONTINUED THAT EVEN WITH THE SUBSTANTIAL CNES CONTRIBUTION, THERE REMAINS A "HOLE" IN THE GOF BUDGET OF 135 MILLION FRANCS (ALMOST \$30 MILLION) WHICH OTHER AGENCIES WILL HAVE TO PICK UP (PRESUMABLY DEFENSE AND PTT). HE AGREED THAT THE 1975 FRENCH CONTRIBUTION TO ARIANE PROGRAM IS 210 MILLION FRANCS.

3. LOUET, WHO BEFORE RETURNING TO THE QUAI D'ORSAY WAS FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISER TO THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT CHARBONNEL DURING THE ARIANE AND SPACE LAB NEGOTIATIONS, GAVE AN INTERESTING DESCRIPTION OF THE HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL DECISIONMAKING ON ARIANE. AT FIRST, PRIME MINISTER CHIRAC WAS "NEGATIVE" AND THE QUAI HIGHLY POSITIVE. AT A MEETING AT THE "FUNCTIONAL" (AS OPPOSED TO MINISTERIAL) LEVEL, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHICH LOUET ATTENDED, CHIRAC WAS WON OVER. OWING TO THE CONTINUED OPPOSITION OF FINANCE MINISTER FOURCADE IN A SPECIAL INTERMINISTERIAL COMMITTEE, THE PRIME MINISTER PASSED THE ULTIMATE DECISION TO THE ELYSEE. A "COMITE RESTREINT" OF RESPONSIBLE MINISTERS PRESENTED THEIR CASE TO THE PRESIDENT. LOUET CONTINUED THAT GISCARD PREFERRED NOT TO MAKE A DECISION THEN, BUT TO HAVE IT MADE TWO DAYS LATER AT THE WEEKLY COUNCIL OF

MINISTERS (ON A PROPOSAL BY CHIRAC). COMMENT: THE IMPLICATION WAS THAT GISCARD DID NOT WISH TO BE IDENTIFIED WITH A POSSIBLY CONTROVERSIAL DECISION.

4. ACCORDING TO CNES PRESIDENT MAURICE LEVY, NO DECISION WILL BE MADE FOR ABOUT TWO WEEKS ON THE CONSEQUENCES FOR CNES OF BUDGETARY RESTRICTIONS AND THE GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO ARIANE. IN A SPEECH TO THE WORRIED EMPLOYEES AT THE TOULOUSE SPACE CENTER, HE FORESAW THAT 1975 AND 1976 WOULD BE DIFFICULT YEARS

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FOR CNES'S NATIONAL PROGRAMS. EFFORTS WERE UNDERWAY TO

OBTAIN EUROPEAN SUPPORT FOR THE SPACE CENTER AT TOULOUSE AND KOUROU (GUYANA). IN ANY CASE WOULD TRY TO AVOID REDUCTIONS IN STAFF THOUGH THAT REMAINS A DISTINCT POSSIBILITY. AFTER 1976, LEVY SAID, THE CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PROGRAMS WOULD DECREASE, ALLOWING CNES TO DEVOTE ADDITIONAL FUNDS TO NATIONAL PROGRAMS.

5. COMMENT: LOUET'S REMARKS GENERALLY ACCORD WITH THE COMMENTARIES MADE IN THE PRESS AND BY OUR OTHER CONTACTS. LOST, HOWEVER, IN ALL THE PRESS COMMENT (AND COVERAGE WAS HEAVY) WAS THE JUSTIFICATION OF ARIANE ON ECONOMIC GROUNDS. THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APPEARED PREDOMINANTLY POLITICAL. AS EXPLAINED BY MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND RESEARCH D'ORNANO TO THE SENATE, "THE OBJECTIVE IS TO GIVE EUROPE ITS INDEPENDENCE IN THE DOMAIN OF SPACE." IN RETURN, THE FRENCH EXPECT THEIR EUROPEAN PARTNERS NOT ONLY TO SHARE THE EXPENSE OF MAINTAINING THE KOUROU AND PART OF THE TOULOUSE SPACE CENTER BUT ALSO TO USE THE ARIANE LAUNCHER, ONCE OPERATIONAL, RATHER THAN US LAUNCHING SERVICES.
STONE

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